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plain how it was that he didn't kill. He walks about, telling loudly how he climbed this hill and descended that, how the thorns scratched him and how he saw no tracks. But the successful hunter sits down with the casual remark that "A tapir has been killed," and after a while, or next day, if it is late, the women go and bring it in. Before he sleeps he must mend his broken arrows, and late at night the yellow light of the dry bamboo illumines his puckered face still bent over them, while his wife sleeps with her baby against her breast. The Kaingáng do not sleep much. Even if there is no work to keep them up—no baskets for the men to weave, no arrows for them to mend—they are forever getting up to eat or to warm themselves by the fire. Before the reservation days they were a hunted people, harassed by another tribe, by the Brazilians, and by one another so that wakefulness became highly valued among them.

When the men are in camp they circulate noisily, but the women sit where they are, mingling their high-pitched voices with those of the men, taking an equal part in the conversation if it concerns anything they have any interest in. It is when the men are gone that the women come together for their own particular kind of intimate gossip: love affairs and projected separations; this one's change of heart and that one's scandalous behavior. They sit in a little group making dresses for themselves or sewing for their husbands or brothers, stopping every half hour or so to suckle their babies, who are given the breast whenever they cry, to scold a child who has defecated in a plate, to snatch another from the fire or to rub passionately a little head that has been bruised in falling. A man in the camp is an added spice to a spicy situation, and if a sprained limb or infected foot keeps him at home he becomes the focus for feminine jokes that run eternally in the same channel.

When the young women go out to pick up the fallen fruit or to gather the yellow *taí* fruit that grows in the center of a large spiked plant, they leave their babies with their old mothers or with other women to be suckled and cared for. Sometimes, if they have children who are a little grown, they may take them with them, but the Kaingáng do not feel that a woman should be accompanied by a little child so that its presence may prevent a swift and surreptitious sex encounter. They are generally free to pursue their love affairs secretly in the bush while their husbands are away, and if they cannot do that they spend their time talking about other people's affairs.

There is really very little for the women to do nowadays. Aside from their specifically feminine functions Kaingáng society could exist just as well without them. They "make the bed" and get the firewood, but their husbands help them build the house. The men hunt and also bring in most of the wild honey, for they range the farthest. It is they who climb the trees

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either a masculine or a feminine object. The vulgar English terms can take only feminine objects, and thus reveal in the very grammatical form of our vulgarisms the feeling that the male is the active and aggressive partner. But among the Kaingáng if Chukembégn picks up his hundred and fifty pound wife by the ears and thumps her down with tears of pain starting from her eyes, she may get up immediately and pound him as the tears trickle down her laughing face, and he roars with delight. Sexual approaches range all the way from the unobtrusive contact of bare legs beside the evening fires to open, ribald, and aggressive onslaughts by both men and women.

Although I never put it to the test, I have a strong feeling that the widowed Kundídn, like many of her sex, was stronger than I. Her amorous pinches, punches, and pushes were a trial to me. Kundídn's aggressiveness stopped only at direct snatches at the sexual organs.

Anggló, who was having a passionate affair with Kanyahé, was not averse to pressing another suit on the side. While she did not square off in the boxerlike manner of Kundídn, she was aggressive enough in her own mild way. She did not pinch so hard nor call so loud, but if there were no one around, her quiet "I should like to talk to you and see the inside of your house" would set me thinking how I could best avoid her without hurting her feelings. But I might have spared myself worry on that score, for in this society, which lays no stress on man's aggressiveness as against woman's passivity, a woman who makes advances feels no vindictive anger at a repulse. In our society a woman who temporarily steps out of her culturally decreed role of the attacked to become the attacker feels shame that quickly becomes resentment against the desired object if she is rebuffed. The shame that she feels at reversing her part in the drama of the sexes is forgotten if she obtains her desire and turns to anger if she does not. But the Kaingáng women are able to make the same jocular approaches day after day without a change of attitude.

When a husband goes away his wife becomes fair game for anyone who is interested, and she is generally willing prey for the enterprising hunter. I must often have served all unwittingly as a chaperon to some man's wife while he was away hunting, but although my naive presence may have seriously handicaped the pair I was left to chaperon, it did not always inhibit them entirely. One day while Chukembégn, his wife Chantágn, Kanggúin, and I were on a hillside feasting on wasp's larvae, the bark of the dogs in pursuit of a tapir came faintly from the distance. Chukembégn seized his gun and was away in a flash, leaving his wife, Kanggúin, and me alone. When he had gone Kanggúin began to boast of his love affairs and to remark how curious it was that he never married. On the way back to camp he kept singing all the way, stopping every once in a while to say:

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"Chantágn, listen to this. Chantágn, listen to this." Singing is a favorite way of showing off among the Kaingáng, as among ourselves. Sometime later after Chukembégn had had a fight with his wife he complained bitterly that Kanggúin had said to her: "'if you were my wife I would not treat you that way.' Whenever anyone has a fight with his wife Kanggúin always talks that way to her. He wants a wife, but no one will live with him!"

Nanmblá has two wives. Although his wives compete for him they are not totally at a loss if they have to sleep without him. When I was at his brother-in-law's house one day while he was away, Nanmblá's wife Wainlúin was there watching with amused appreciation while Padnmbá cast a knife at a log. Nothing passed between them but their boisterous laughter, but when Padnmbá at last went away Wainlúin leaned against the house-post and gazed after him. When he had gone fifty paces down the path he turned around, flashed a smile, and disappeared down the slope. I never heard what happened between Wainlúin and Padnmbá after that, but I did hear of a quarrel that Nanmblá had with both his wives because they had relations with other men. One day I saw Vomblé caressing his son's mother-in-law. Another time Chukembégn told me that he and a few others were on the side of a hill when a little way's off they saw Padnmbá making love to Waikuklő's wife in the bushes. Soon she got up and ran off but Chukembégn and his companions called out laughingly "You don't have to run; we saw you." A complete account of all the sexual intrigues would fill a long but rather repetitious chapter.

The amorous history of every young man or woman is one of the favorite themes of conversation among the young people. "First Koktá had an affair with Yonggó, then with Kanggúin and then with me. Then she went around with Kanyahé but he left her and took up with Yu'ő." "I went around for a while with Koktá. . . ." "Oh, no you didn't. She used to go around with Kundágn but now she's going to change to Kanyahé." They enumerate, expand, correct without end and with unflagging interest.

I never heard them discuss these affairs in front of the principals' spouses, but Amendő's presence did not prevent them from joking about her unmarried daughter's relations with Padnmbá and Ndíli. "Layongndá [her daughter] is lying with Ndíli. She has gone off with her lover Ndíli to get nuts." Amendő sat listening and laughing while she nursed her little bastard of five months.

The Kaingáng preoccupation with sex expresses itself also in the belief that death is often caused by intercourse with a supernatural monster or with a ghost. Both men and women may wake up in the morning sick and bleeding or insane because they have spent the night with the supernatural, who has lured or forced them into intercourse. Unlike their neighbors in

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the actual security it affords make them seek it eagerly, and in spite of the 691
lightness with which they seem to take it no marriage can be broken without some kind of mild stir and an early effort on the part of the principals to form another alliance, while their relatives try to patch up the old one. When Chantágn only felt that she *might* lose her husband she was already at my door asking whether I would be her next. However, unstable it may be, particularly in the beginning, marriage nevertheless is one of the ideal pillars of security on which the Kaingáng personality seeks ever to support itself. They have built their society on warm personal attachments, and [152]
anyone without such attachments makes them uneasy and perplexed. No [181]
one is spoken of more sadly than a mature person who is alone. "For a long time," said Voenblé sadly, "my father wandered around all over without a wife. At last when his brother died he married his wives." The women who did not try to interest me in themselves or in their children besought me to marry someone else—anyone—and one day even Yokó, a matron who was generally too shy to speak much to me, quizzed me uncomprehendingly on my bachelorhood and advised me to marry—not so that I could have someone to cook for me and mend my clothes, but just in order to be married. "Why? Why?" she kept repeating, "why do you live thus without a wife? Get a wife." "Whom shall I marry?" said I. "Marry anybody. Why go around unmarried?" Even the children found it hard to believe that I was single and they used to question me interminably: "Have you a wife in your country?" "Have you a sweetheart in your country?" "Will you marry her when you go back?" "Do you intend to marry?"

Once a couple are married they do not drop the liaisons formed before 737 ●
marriage. Their long training in philandering and the absence of an ideal 581
of faithfulness have not suited them to the stability that marriage implies. Furthermore the absence of binding legal forms or big property stakes, as well as the knowledge that a meal can always be found at one's father's or brother's fire, that one's mother or sister-in-law is ready to cook the food and spread the bed, makes marriage brittle and its rupture not sharply felt. Yet, in an utterly contradictory manner, the Kaingáng believe that a man and woman, once they are "sitting together," belong to each other, and they use the same word to designate this possession as they use for the exclusive possession of material objects. This theoretical possessiveness comes into constant conflict with the actual sharing in which the young people have taken part all their lives. The young man who for years before his marriage has dallied with the wife of anyone from his father to his second cousin, who has day in and day out enjoyed adultery with an equally delighted adulteress, decides suddenly, once he is married, that his possession should be exclusive. "I left my wife," Yuvén said to me, "because she took Kanjuhé and Kundígn as lovers. She sleeps with everyone. All the women

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237 are that way. When their husbands go away they sleep with others. That is
571 why I want to marry a Brazilian woman."

237 The conflict between the sharing that is experienced and absolutely exclusive possession, which is simply and unqualifiedly theory, is far more fundamental in Kaingáng society than it is in our own. Adultery in Kaingáng society is not a circumstance of some marriages but a condition of practically all. Yet, although husband and wife live in constant suspicion of each other's loyalty, it rarely becomes desperate. Husbands do not as a rule follow their wives about, nor wives their husbands, although if there are good grounds for suspicion a husband may beat his wife or a wife her husband. He often leaves her for days at a time even when he knows that there are enterprising men still in camp and no one to chaperon her. This attitude really saves the culture from becoming a nightmare. In a society in which everyone believes that everybody else is engaged in seducing his neighbor's wife, suspicion backed by intense jealousy would drive people to desperation. But when Waipó leaves his wife to go across the river to make manioc all she has to say to him is a laughing, "You're going over there where everyone is living in very close quarters," and with a rough caress he is gone. One evening when Chukembégn and I were coming from the manioc mill I said to him, "Now that you've left your wife alone she may sleep with someone else." "I don't care; let her," said he. There is something more than mere bravado in this statement. It expresses the typical determination not to see what is not forced on one.

582 Since hunting is the most vital occupation, it might be supposed that a good hunter would be the most desirable husband. It might be felt also that since the Kaingáng used to be perpetually at war with the Brazilians, with the Kangdjá, and with their vendetta enemies, they would place a high premium on ferocity, daring, bravery, enterprise, and intelligence and that these traits would influence a woman in the choice of a husband. Nevertheless a number of attitudes combined to render all these qualities almost completely inoperative.

224 Although hunting is the very basis of their economy the Kaingáng,
654 curiously enough, do not recognize differences in hunting skill. If a man returns empty-handed from the hunt he and his wife may share their relatives' food without shame. In all the time I was among the Kaingáng I never heard an unsuccessful hunter spoken of with scorn nor saw one overcome with shame, and although she may scold him roundly, no wife ever leaves her husband for coming home without meat.

228 Just as they assume that all men are practically equals in hunting skill
167 the Kaingáng assume that all men are brave. Special emphasis is laid on this trait, therefore, only in exceptional cases. This holds also for intelligence, for the Kaingáng have a strong tendency to think of wisdom

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Through her marriage Vanhé's family gained Vanhé as an ally in the quest for food. Even before marriage a girl's sexual interests are beneficial to her family, for her lovers come with presents of food, and they are welcome at her parents' fireside. The food a lover brings is not payment for favors he has received but a gift in expectation of favors still to come. Even after her marriage a woman's amorous intrigues are of considerable advantage to those around her—even to her own husband, for every time she attracts a man she has added a hunter to the band. Wherever his mistress is, there the lover stays, and unless her husband gets wind of the affair and flies into a rage the lover may very likely follow the camp almost indefinitely. His presence is welcome, of course, for another gun or bow and another knife and axe mean so much more meat and honey. Thus even adultery plays a constructive role in Kaingáng society, for it keeps within the band men who might otherwise go elsewhere in search of satisfaction, and it often culminated in polyandrous marriage, which has been one of the strongest integrating forces in Kaingáng society.

The story is told of Kuvén who was the lover of both Kanggá and her mother. Now as Kanggá's father grew old and it became difficult for him to get meat, he felt more and more the necessity of having someone to help him hunt for his large family. As long as Kuvén remained he could depend on him, but when it seemed that the young man was becoming interested in Yemái, a woman who was no relative of his and whom, therefore, Kuvén might follow far away to her relatives, Kanggá's father said to his wife and daughter: "Call Kuvén; if he marries Yemái he will leave me and go away. Let him get food for your children when I die. If he marries another woman he will throw your children away." So Kanggá's mother called Kuvén and said to her daughter: "Marry him. I am going to live with you and him." So Kuvén married both mother and daughter, and when Kanggá's father died Kuvén took care of the latter's children.

The Kaingáng have no system of clans or moieties[1] to impose social obligations on them. Their kinship system is not the crystallization of inescapable obligations that is found in many other primitive societies but principally a device for grouping people in large age classes. Their mode of life also made the maintenance of complex systems of obligations and loyalties extremely difficult, for they wandered from place to place in little groups of two to twenty adults. Even the biological family had little permanence as a cooperating unit, for children wandered away from their parents when they grew up and brothers separated to go with their in-laws or to travel with childhood playmates and hunting companions in search of adventure. Under the influence of the conflicting obligations of blood and marriage the composition of the small group of adults was forever changing. The dependence of the men on one another, and even their fundamental reali-

[1] See Appendix II, p. 175.

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Amendó and the other husbands and Nggevén married her young son-in-law and went away.

In relationships like these the violent hostility between an aging father and his son, both striving for the same woman, is resolved through the son's marriage to his step-mother. This has happened over and over again in Kaingáng society, and it is one of the few instances in which a people have been able to settle this ancient conflict peaceably. Instead of being violently possessive like the typical male in our society and like not a few in his own, Wanyekí was willing to share his wives. First he relinquished two of them and then he permitted his son and other men to come and share his remaining wife. This brought peace and security not only to him but also to the men who escaped conflict through his behavior, to the innumerable sympathizers who would have taken sides in the concomitant quarreling, and to the women who escaped the beatings that an angry husband might have given them. Wanyekí possessed a foresight that Yuvén[4] lacked. Yuvén, young, jealous and possessive, drove out his two co-husbands, but as he grew older and his family multiplied he was compelled to accept Kuvén as the husband of both his wife and daughter, for only in that way did he feel that his wife and children would be adequately cared for.

Yakwí is another violent possessive man who got into difficulties because he was unwilling to share his wife. Although he is about sixty years old he is as vigorous as any young man. His powerful muscles bulge beneath his skin and he is tireless in the hunt. No one is faster than he at clearing land for planting. For a nomad, unused to the ways of white civilization, he is an unusually energetic farmer. His violent rages were a trial to me. His wife was not at all like him. She was given to thieving, it is true, but my battles with her were always more or less genial. She was a persistent but gentle thief. She must have been about fifty years old, wonderfully well preserved, and her skin was a beautiful golden tan. There was no doubt that Anggló wanted a kind of love-making that her husband could not give her. So she turned to her son-in-law Kanyahé. Years before she and Yakwí had had a daughter, an only child, who had married Kanyahé but died a few years before I came to the reservation. Kanyahé was about thirty years old. He too was powerfully built, and for energy in the hunt he could match Yakwí. He kept a large household supplied with meat when no one else had any. His sexuality was aggressive and open, and he carried on his affairs almost under the noses of the husbands.

His affair with Anggló made the older man desperate. When Anggló came home he fought with her, not daring to mention the subject of the

[4] Kanggí's father. See p. 56.

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137 quarrel, but always pretending to rage about some irrelevant matter. One night there was a terrific uproar in their house. Both Yakwá and Anggló were yelling at the tops of their voices. But never a word about the real subject of the quarrel. Instead Yakwá was berating her for working somewhere else instead of helping him. Anggló in a towering rage struck her husband. There was no limit to her daring. Once she slept in the forest two nights with Kanyahé and came back early in the morning and lay down among the Indians who were making manioc at their mill. The Indians told me that when her husband saw her he kicked her twice in the belly. But, Anggló said to her cousin: "He may kill me, but I will not leave Kanyahé. I don't want Yakwá. I want something new." Anggló's passion for Kanyahé was a fine show that nearly everyone enjoyed.

Under the influence of her love affair Anggló's desire for a child became heightened to a passionate intensity. First she asked her cousin Koktá to ask me for something to "make her blood come out." Once before Koktá's husband had come to me for medicine, because his wife had a "pain in the belly." I had given him a phial of castor oil. It turned out, however, that the pain was a menstrual cramp, and the dose of castor oil precipitated the flow. Since the Kaingáng think that "women menstruate in order to have children" an association between castor oil and childbearing was easily made. I explained to Koktá that she was mistaken in thinking that castor oil had anything to do with menstruation and she at last gave up trying to persuade me to give her some for Anggló. But Anggló was not satisfied, and several days later when there was no one around she came up to me shyly and begged me for "medicine to make my blood come out. My blood is all choked up inside of me." Of course I could do nothing for her. As we stood there arguing her sister's husband walked by unconcernedly. Next day he said to me, "I know what she asked you for, she asked you for a medicine to make her have children. She asked me too, but I wouldn't give it to her because she won't sleep with her husband and he won't let anyone else do it; so she can't have intercourse anyway."

There was no limit to the enjoyment that the people derived from this struggle between three human beings, which might have been so easily settled if Yakwá and Kanyahé had become co-husbands of Anggló. Once when most of us were up the river at a weeding bee on Yuplú's farm a group of people around me began to talk about how Yakwá pursued his wife. Yakwá was not far off; so they talked quietly, without a change of expression or a smile that would have indicated the spicy nature of the conversation. A few days before, in the dead of night, Yakwá, who had come looking for his wife, had come where many Indians were gathered to help the agent weed his corn. He had wandered around among the sleepers like some wild animal, and some of them even thought he was one.

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Later in the day Kanyahé took it into his head to make fun of me. "You're always walking around making love," he shouted. "No I'm not," I yelled back. We had a large audience. "You make love everywhere," Kanyahé bellowed; "everybody sees you!" "You lie, you're the one who makes love." "You bet I do," he roared. This was my cue to see how far he was willing to walk on thin ice, and I retaliated: "No one has to see you. It is the talk of everyone, how much you walk about taking women." This was too much even for Kanyahé. He dropped the subject immediately without another word and turned to weeding. Through it all Yakwí stood, his powerful hands on the handle of his scythe, a broad smile on his face, completely enjoying the show.

This affair throws into bold relief the fate that awaits the principals in a conflict whose solution is prevented by a possessive husband. The jealous husband pursues his wife to the point where his behavior causes much smiling behind polite hands. His endless quarrels with her culminate in blows and often in dissolution of the marriage. Yakwí's threat to kill Kanyahé would never have been carried out because murder in Kaingáng society must have a background of vendetta,[8] but it illustrates well the complete break between the two men.

Another drama enacted by a mother and a son-in-law, illustrates the ever-ripening character of this relationship. Just as they have resolved the struggle between a man and his son for the same woman through the son's marriage to his stepmother, the Kaingáng have arrested the conflict between a woman and her daughter for the same man by the man's marrying his mother-in-law too.[9] Instead of surrounding the mother-in-law with disrupting taboos that send the son-in-law flying when he hears her coming or keeping him cooling his heels outside as long as his mother-in-law, whose face he may not see, is in the house, the Kaingáng have developed the relationship between a man and his mother-in-law to the point where he sometimes marries her and becomes the second father of her children. Such was the relationship between Kuvén and Kanngí's mother and between the captive Nyepá and his mother-in-law, Kuichó. Yakwí has no one to take care of him if his wife Anggló chooses to remain at the post while he goes hunting with me and the Indians. But if his widowed mother-in-law, whose household he never left as long as she was alive, went along, his food was cooked when he came back after a long day's tramp in the forest just as if she had been his wife and there were always fresh fern leaves for him to stretch his body on. At night he slept beside the old woman or at her feet across the campfire. When he moved camp it was she who carried his few belongings, and when she needed a basket it was

[8] See pp. 52, 60.
[9] I have no instances of a man's marrying his daughter-in-law.